

HIGH SIERRA USERS GROUP



BOARD OF DIRECTORS...

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MEETINGS...

LOCATION & DATE: General meeting and ST Special Interest
Group--Truckee Meadows Community College--Room 212;
Truckee Meadows Community College SAT. JULY 18--10 A.M.

ANNUAL DUES...

ANNUAL DUES are \$15.00. If you see a warning dot or
notice on your label, please renew your membership by
sending your dues to: HISUG; P. O. BOX 2152; SPARKS, NV.
89432. High Sierra Users Group is an independent
organization for Atari Computer users in the Reno area.

NOTE: If you want to see this group continue, to develop
its fine program library and to publish this
newsletter...THEN PAY YOUR DUES PROMPTLY...Don't take
these services for granted. Your dues are our only source
of income, and we can't continue without them. SEND YOUR
DUES IN NOW!

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL

TO: HISUG; P.O. BOX 2152; SPARKS, NV. 89432

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

CITY-STATE-ZIP.....

ARTICLES FOR THE JOURNAL...

Articles for the JOURNAL are always welcome. If you wish
to submit them in printed form, please set your printer
for a 3-1/2 inch wide column in condensed type face.
However, as long as your copy is legible, even
handwritten copy is O.K. Articles will be printed as
space permits, and according to the editor's judgment of
suitability. Letters to the Editor are also welcome.
Please send material to: Italo Gavazzi; 825 Wilkinson
Ave.; Reno NV 89502 by the tenth of the month for
publication during that month.

EDITOR COMMENTS...

Well, the hot weather is here, and fortunately, my
computer is operated from a nice, cool basement. This
helps to overcome the summer lethargy when it comes time
to produce another newsletter.

However, I must confess that except for producing
newsletters, my computer has been rather idle of late.

Chuck Daly recently returned from an Atari conference
sponsored by several users' groups in San Jose, CA. If
you're interested in finding out what he learned, please
attend next Saturday's meeting. We expect Chuck will be
on hand to tell you the latest.

Cris Manson in her monthly STS16 has some very pertinent
comments regarding the present state of affairs within
our group, particularly as it relates to the 16-bit
members. By default, our board of directors consists
entirely of 8-bit owners. We didn't plan it that way--it
just happened. But there would be more vitality within
the group if the 16-bit owners would become more active
and visible. There's good support for the 16-bit
machines. In fact, that's where most of the action is
now. But the need for interaction between members is
always there, as Syd Allen points out in his comments
this month. Your editor has turned to those people in the
16-bit group who are willing and able to contribute

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articles, namely Cris Manson and Syd Allen. Ironically, both of these people are unable to attend meetings through no fault of theirs. Are the rest of you 16-bit owners inarticulate--or are you so busy playing with your computers that you have no time for the users' group?

As an 8-bit owner--and a die-hard 8-bit owner, I might add, I can see the hand-writing on the wall. The future defined in terms of new software belongs to the larger capacity machines. The good Atari programmers have largely shifted over to them. The advertisers and software publishers have largely shifted over also. An article in the Rockford (Illinois) Atari Computer Club Newsletter recently reported a CompuServe SIG*ATARI Conference. The subject was the future of 8-bit publishing, and the conference was attended by representatives from ANTIC, ANALOG, ATARI JOURNAL, ATARI EXPLORER, and COMPUTE magazines. The trends mentioned are quite evident, in spite of the large numbers of 8-bit owners still out there using their machines.

Well, I said I'm a die-hard 8-bit owner, and so I remain. The fact is that I'm still happy with my present hardware and software.

Other points of view will have to come from other folks.

GOOD BUYS...

Chuck Daly reports the following bargains: Obtainable locally--a surge-protected power strip at Costco at a very low price.

Seen at the San Jose computer show--Habba 10 megabyte hard drive for the 8-bit machines. Includes drive, controller, and power supply in a nice box for \$250.00. If interested, see Chuck about this. He will tell you where to obtain it.



ATARI 800XL

8 BIT NEWS

XX

SUMMER CES REPORT...

(As reported in the July Boise "Bug News" published by the Atari Boise Users Group. The CES is the Summer Consumer Electronics Show, held in Chicago in early June.)

First the bad news--it definitely appears that the 8-bit 3 1/2" disk drive is down the tubes, primarily due to the less-than-enthusiastic reaction of third-party software

developers to the smaller format. In its place, Atari plans to introduce the XF551, a true double-density, two-sided 5 1/4" disk drive said to be nearly three times faster than the Atari 1050. OSS, developers of DOS 2.0 and DOS 2.5, is working on ADOS, a disk operating system compatible with single, enhanced, and double density...The long-awaited XEP80 80-column plug-in module and SX212 1200 baud modem likewise should be on the market in July. "AtariWriter Plus 80" was being shown. Keith Ledbetter, author of the various versions of "Express" public domain terminal software demonstrated a new version written for the SX212. No word as to whether the new "Express" will support the XEP80, though. The new XE Game System was on display. The Game System will include a joystick, a light-gun, and ROM-based versions of "Missile Command," "Flight Simulator II" (the 128K FS2 cartridge combines the program and scenery, which are on separate disks in the older disk-based versions), and something called "Bug Hunt"...Good news for 8-biters interested in desktop publishing. Springboard Software is in the process of porting its popular "Newsroom" software over to the Atari 8-bit line. According to company president John Paulson, this is a direct result of Atari owners asking for support for their machines...Other new 8-bit products shown or announced at the Summer CES include: "Animation Station" from Suncom, a touch tablet with software; the first authorized computer version of "Dungeons and Dragons" from SSI; "Video Title Shop," which creates graphics or text titles for VCR tapes, from DataSoft; "Alternate Reality--The Dungeon," also from DataSoft; "Virtuoso," a music and graphics storyboard system; and two new titles for the 2600 game machine from Activision, "Kung Fu Master" and "Commando."

ABOUT LIBRARY FILES...

The following explanation relates to the 8-bit Library Files. This is primarily for the benefit of our newer members. Most of this is borrowed directly from an article in "Nybbles & Bytes," published by the Phoenix, AZ Combined Atari User Groups.

If you would better understand what a particular program in our disk library is, the three letter extender in its title often will give you a clue to its nature. These extenders are in general use, and have become quite standardized.

.BAS-.SAV-.LST-.BXL-.BXE-.TUR

These extenders normally indicate the file is written in the BASIC language. The programs with .BAS and .SAV are normally LOADED and RUN or just RUN. However, those with .LST indicates that they were LISTED instead of SAVED, which means that they must be ENTERED and then RUN as follows: ENTER "D:PROGRAM.LST" then RUN. Files with the .BXL, .BXE, and .TUR extenders refer to special versions of the BASIC language. BASIC XL and BASIC XE are products

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of O.S.S. Turbobasic is largely in the public domain and is included in our library. These BASIC language versions include special commands that are not understood by Atari BASIC. Files with .BXL, .BXE, and .TUR will best be run with those special BASICS installed. Turbobasic is compatible with Atari BASIC, and will run properly if no special commands have been used.

.OBJ-.BIN-.EXE-.RUN

These extenders refer to programs written in machine language rather than BASIC. They are loaded without BASIC. Owners of the XL and XE machines must hold down the OPTION key when powering up. They are usually loaded from DOS by using the "L" option.

.M65-.MAC-.ASM

These are usually programs written in assembly language. Before they can be run they must first be "assembled". This requires some knowledge of assembly language and access to the appropriate assembler (M65 by O.S.S., Atari MACRO Assembler, or the Atari Editor Assembly cartridge). These programs are also known as source code programs, and are usually informational in nature for the benefit of assembly language programmers.

.ACT

Files with this extender indicate that they were written in the ACTION! language, and require the installation of that language in the computer. ACTION! is an O.S.S. product. Some programs written in ACTION! have been made available by computer magazines in a run-time version so that they will run from DOS with the "L" option. However, these will usually have the .EXE extender.

.TXT-.DOC-.ATW-.PPC

These extenders indicate "text files." They can usually be run by installing a word-processing program or from DOS by using the "COPY" option. The extenders .ATW and .PPC refer respectively to the word-processors AtariWriter and PaperClip, and are best run with those programs since they may include their specific codes.

.AMS-.MUS

These extenders denote musical programs, .AMS referring to the Advanced Music System format. Our library contains some .AMS files, and these will require a program to enable them. Usually, this program is on the same disk as the files. If not, look for it on other .AMS disks.

.FNT-.DAT

The .FNT extender identifies a file that contains an alphabet or font to replace the standard Atari character

set. In order to use it, you will require the installation of a font-loading program. Several programs will allow the use of special fonts, and recognize the .FNT extender. Among these are Typesetter and Graphics Master.

The extender .DAT usually indicates a data file intended to be used with a specific filing program. The data may be examined, like text files, on the actual disk, but it is not intended to be RUN.

.DEM-.DMO

Merely indicates a demonstration program. It may have been written in any Atari compatible language, but is usually on a disk with the enabling program.

.SYS-.ARx-.COM

These extenders denote files that are usually used at the time the system is being powered up. .SYS is short for "system"; .AR is short for "autorun"; .COM is short for "command". Programs with these extenders are sometimes used in connection with special DOS system, but they are usually intended to be used at power-up or shortly thereafter, as utilities.

We hope that this explanation of the various extenders commonly used will help you to understand that all files are not created equal. You will find all of them on our library program disks. It is our hope that understanding the differences will greatly help you in using the library disks.

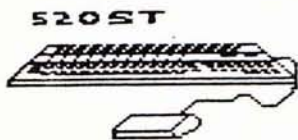
SYD ALLEN COMMENTS...

Hi, Pete

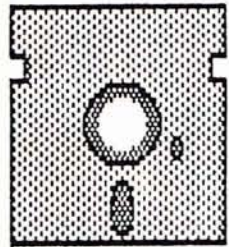
In my utopian isolation I'd forgotten the poor feedback one can expect by mail. Phone calls to dropouts, as you suggest, even if only several, would surely elicit useful info. The problem is not just ours: in the May CURRENT NOTES the editor discussed the decreasing membership in the seven Washington D.C. users groups (W.A.A.C.E.), and his statements apply word for word to our situation.

Yet HISUG members have much to offer: their personal reactions to the software they have bought, as one example. So many programs are not reviewed at all, or incompletely....

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16 BIT NEWS



REVIEW

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DATA MANAGER ST...

Take DATA MANAGER ST, by Timeworks, for one. Nicely packaged and having considerable power, it nevertheless has a few bugs, some awkward implementations, and a very rigid address label facility. While the labels can be of any size, they cannot vary from 3 to 5 lines and still have information consistently in the correct field, for sorting by field, unless you are willing to have blank lines on the labels when that field is not used..n that's ugly! Even DB MASTER ONE, which is not nearly as good in other ways, closes up the blank spaces in viewing or printing.

DATA MANAGER ST's manual looks good, yet is not complete. It is also written in a patronizing conversational style; visualization would have been better aided by command sequence lists. But a real kicker comes when you save your work in a so-called ASCII file; when loaded into 1st Word it proves to have embedded the codes for *light*, *bold*, *underline*, *superscript* and *half line feed*! It is all over the document in the blank spaces; a real pain to keep undoing. Anyone know what is going on here?

Would we buy it again? Dunno....Timeworks is supposed to have a good rep for help and updates, and we *might* have an early copy (Reg. No. 270045). I've written them.

Anyone bought DBSENSE (\$49 relational database) from Sense Software? How about AUTOPROGRAM (database, \$39 special) from BRAINSTORM SOFTWARE? What are your experiences? [Syd Allen]

CHANGING RESOLUTIONS...

Changing resolutions through the Set Preferences box will cause a reboot that loads another set of your accessories on top of the first, often causing subsequent problems because your main program now doesn't have enough ram to run in properly. A solution is placing in an auto folder the reboot.prg from the disk in Spring START magazine; this almost simulates a cold start. It does not work right under some circumstances; you will have to experiment. My own style is to arrange files on disks in such a way as to avoid rez changes with a lot of accessories loaded. I also have a couple of specially set up disks that create an effective reset under various circumstances.

Another solution is found on the first PD disk that you get free when you subscribe to a new, and very good, ST newspaper: ST Informer, 909 NW Starlite Place, Grants Pass, OR 97526. \$14.95 for 12 issues. The program is explained in the first issue. There are other exceptional programs on this first disk, and subsequent disks are very inexpensive for subscribers. In some ways it looks better than START, even, depending upon your interests. It is very much cheaper: hope they can keep up the quality!

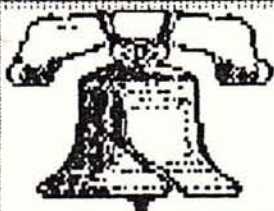
You can have reboot.prg in the same auto folder with other auto-load programs (such as recent ram disks), if you save it to the folder with an earlier date on the control.acc clock than when any other .prg is saved to it: the system addresses the .prgs in order of when saved, and reboot.prg must be addressed first. (See COMPUTE! Nov '86, pp.8-9 for more info on how the system boots up.) [Syd Allen]

ST MISCELLANY...

...Has anyone read the FoReM ST BBS/Michtron 2.0 BBS comparison in ASTUN? FoReM comes out way ahead in usability, flexibility and power, and it's the one ASTUN uses. There are other ST BBS programs; anyone know what they are like? ...Want to see a late list of all ST regular (not PD) software? Larry at COMPUTER HOUSE has a copy of the May List from CURRENT NOTES PD library. 1259 programs, and at 50-60 new ones each month should be over 1400 by the time you read this; telephone numbers included so you can call for literature...or Larry may have it. [Syd Allen]

RE-INKING AND RIBBON LIFE...

We are re-inking only about three times because we are a little afraid of the hole that breaks through, after only one re-inking, at the slant weld mark where the ribbon is melted together to make it endless. No bent pins, but a growing dimness for two or three letters where the break goes by. Minor damage shows on other parts of the ribbon after about 5 re-inkings. How ribbons can be re-inked 50x, as we have read, we don't know. [Syd Allen]



THE HISUG JOURNAL PRESENTS

STSIG



JULY 1987

DESIGNED WITH PUBLISHING PARTNER from SOL II OCK

RI NO SPARKS NV

Dear Editor,

Just another member's opinion, here.

Looking back over the last couple of years, I can see what has happened to the club. I would like to lay the blame for the dissolution in ATARI's lap, and may still. They may have made a terrific move for their company, but the user's groups were right in the line of fire.

Our group became divided and no organization, regardless of it's intent, can function well divided. When folks began changing their systems to the ST line, there was a lot of hard feelings on both sides. The dust has settled somewhat and our group still lies divided. The eightbitters are content to remain so, and the sixteenbitters have little leadership, or so it seems. The eightbitters are leaving the sixteenbitters to fend for themselves and in my estimation, rightfully so. Is there anyone leading the sixteenbitters at the monthly meetings? Would it be of any benefit to use the newsletter to let the absentee members know what's happening at the meetings regarding leadership of the ST people?

I am not able to attend the once a month meetings on Saturday. My sole information regarding the club comes from the newsletter. Most of the ST section is written by folks who are not able to attend the meetings. Does the paper report on happenings at the meetings? Are there any minutes of what is being voted on or demoed? No, but I think it would better link membership together if it did. If someone could tape the meeting, or scribble something down regarding happenings, I would be happy to transcribe them into the newsletters format.

As per Syd Allen's request in the

June issue of the Journal, it would be nice to see a list of the membership and who they are, maybe with phone numbers listed and/or level of expertise listed. After all isn't that what a user group is for? Helping each other?

I would like to help, but for me to be of any value, I would have to ask the ST people to meet on another night and it would probably end up in a different location. I personally think that this would divide the group permanently, and I am not anxious for that to happen. Is there anyone out there who has any feedback? (I know you're out there, I sold alot of you your new systems, and I can also hear you breathing!). IF there WAS a number of ST people who wanted to meet separately, LET'S HEAR FROM YOU!



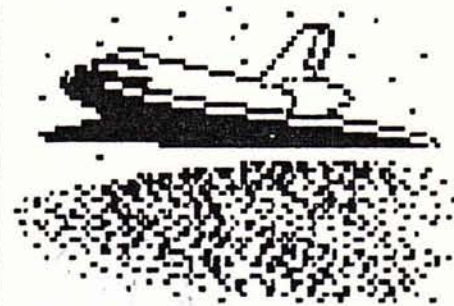
Would you like to see a household budget set up on the ATARI ST in a simple fashion? Would you like some clues in solving 'Space Quest'? Would you like to know more about GFA Basic? How to enlarge your monochrome monitor screen display? Have your youngster type in a short story only to have it talk the whole thing back? Think of it...one entire meeting could be devoted to connecting five ST's together to play 'Kill A Happy Face'!!

Regards,
Cris Manson

CLIP ART FOR PUBLISHING PARTNER!!

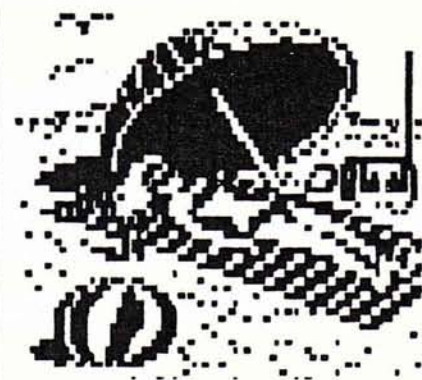
I have dreamed of this in my sleep! On the Delphi BBS there is a program for mono

only at this time that will take all the clip art from your Printmaster Plus disks and convert them into a format that Publishing Partner can use! Oh Glory Be! And it works!! Take a gander at the example below:



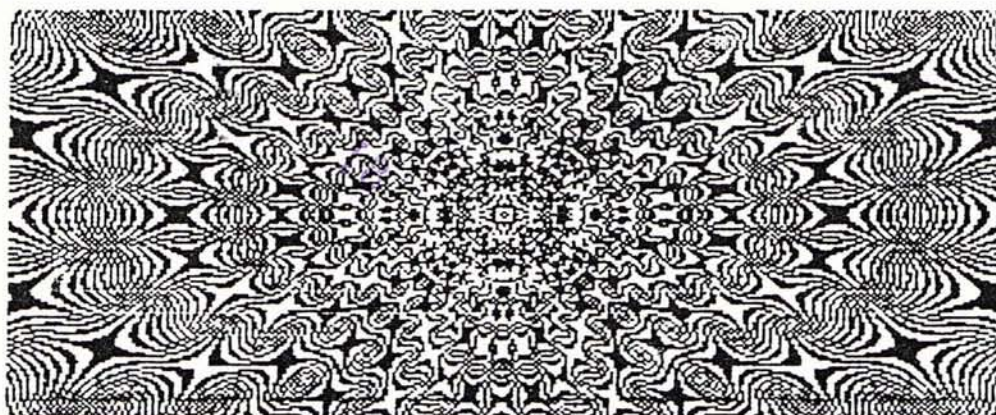
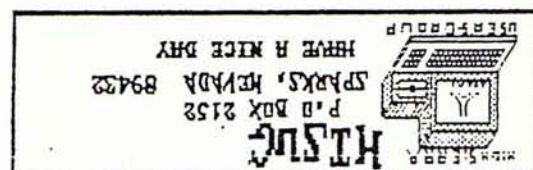
The Shuttle Pic was converted from the Art Gallery I disk. The convert program allows for three different clip art pictures to be saved to one file which is Degas compatible. It saves space and enables you to go into your draw program to enhance it before importing into PP. Thanks to Mr. Sol Guber of MO. for this one!! And YES, I was happy to send him a monetary thankyou. I hope it will encourage him to continue in his ST programming efforts.

IT'S SUMMER!!



COME TO THE MEETING AND BRING A FRIEND!

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